

Yitzhak Epstein-A Brief Biography & Quotes

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BASED On Declassified Israeli Documents & Personal Diaries**1862-1943**

Yitzhak Epstein was one of the few Zionist Jewish leaders who was a Palestinian, which gave him a especial understanding of the Arab's way of life and thinking. Between 1929 and 1930, he worked in construction in Transjordan, and in 1930 he was awarded a fellowship at the American University at Beirut, Lebanon. Epstein lived for eight months with Bedouin Arab tribes in the desert, as a result he published two books in Hebrew about the Bedouins: "Their Life and Customs" in 1933 and "The Population of Transjordan" in 1934. During the same period, he also worked in intelligence gathering for the Jewish Agency Political Department, and became one of its leading Arab specialists.

In 1905, during the Zionist Congress convention at Bessel (Switzerland), Yitzhak Epstein delivered a lecture about the "Arab question" :

"Among the difficult questions connected to the idea of the renaissance of our people on its soil there is one which is equal to all others: the question of our relations with the Arabs. . . . We have FORGOTTEN one small matter: There is in our beloved land an entire nation, which has occupied it for hundreds of years and has never thought to leave it. . . .

We are making a GREAT psychological error with regard to a great, assertive, and jealous people. While we feel a deep love for the land of our forefathers, we forgot that the nation who lives in it today has a sensitive heart and loving soul. The Arab, like every man, is tied to his native land with strong bonds." ([Righteous Victims](#), p. 57)

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